

## HOW TO INSTALL WALL TILE YOURSELF

Are you longing for a fresh, new look in your bathroom or kitchen? Incorporating new wall tile could be your answer. By following these simple directions, installing tile yourself can be a fun and relatively simple project.

### Plan Your Design

To start, you'll need to decide if you want to keep it simple or go all out by incorporating mosaic, glass, or metal wall tile. Plan your project by sketching out your dream tile design. Then measure the area you'll be tiling, and use a tile estimator tool to determine the quantity of tile needed.

### Prepare Your Surface

Existing walls may need extra preparation. You'll need to make sure that your surface is thoroughly clean, dry, and stable. Start by scraping away any loose paint, then fill in any holes and cracks with spackle. Finally, when the surface is dry, use a light sandpaper to make sure it's even.

### Gather Your Tools

Your tile installation will go smoother if you are fully prepared with any tools you might need. Have the following tools readily available:

\*Metal straight edge \*Tape measure \*Level \*Trowel \*Tile adhesive \*Spacers \*Tile cutter \*Tile nipper \*Mallet  
\*Premixed grout \*Grout float \*Large sponge \*Start Tiling

Set a piece of straight wood below where your bottom tile will sit. Confirm that the piece of wood is level before temporarily attaching it to the wall. The piece of wood will serve as a support system for the tile until the adhesive dries.

Using a trowel, spread the adhesive in small sections with the notched edge, then install a few tiles with spacers above the piece of wood. Press tiles down with a slight twisting motion, but try not to slide them. If the tiles you're using don't come with spacers, you can purchase them separately and put them in place to keep the grout lines even. Keep combing the adhesive in an outward motion, and finish up the first row.

Repeat these steps, and continue tiling the wall. Work up and out from the center, and lightly, but firmly, tap the tiles with a mallet to secure them into place. Finally, clean any excess adhesive with a sponge, and make sure that there isn't any residue on the surface of the tile. Keep in mind that your adhesive will begin to dry out in about a half an hour so work quickly and in small batches.

### Cut Tiles to Fit

Your tile project will most likely require some cutting at the edges and around outlets. Use a pencil to mark the tile with a line where you need to make the cut. There are a few different tools that are used to cut tile. For straight and diagonal cuts, use a tile cutter, for curved cuts, use a tile nipper (chip away at the tile for the best result), and for full-length curved cuts, use a wet saw. Always be sure to cut away from yourself.

### Apply Grout

Generally, you should wait 24 hours for adhesives to cure before grouting. Read the directions on the grout package carefully, and try not to make more grout than what you can spread in 30 minutes. Remove the tile spacers, scoop the grout onto the tile, and pack it into the spaces between the tile. Wipe off any excess grout, and be sure to wipe off tiles with your sponge. Make sure you rinse your sponge and change the water as needed. Repeat these steps until your tile project is complete.

Once you've finished applying the grout, you should give your tile and grout a few days to set. After a few days, you can enjoy your beautiful new tile. Tile is a great addition to any home, but it's even better when you've laid it yourself.